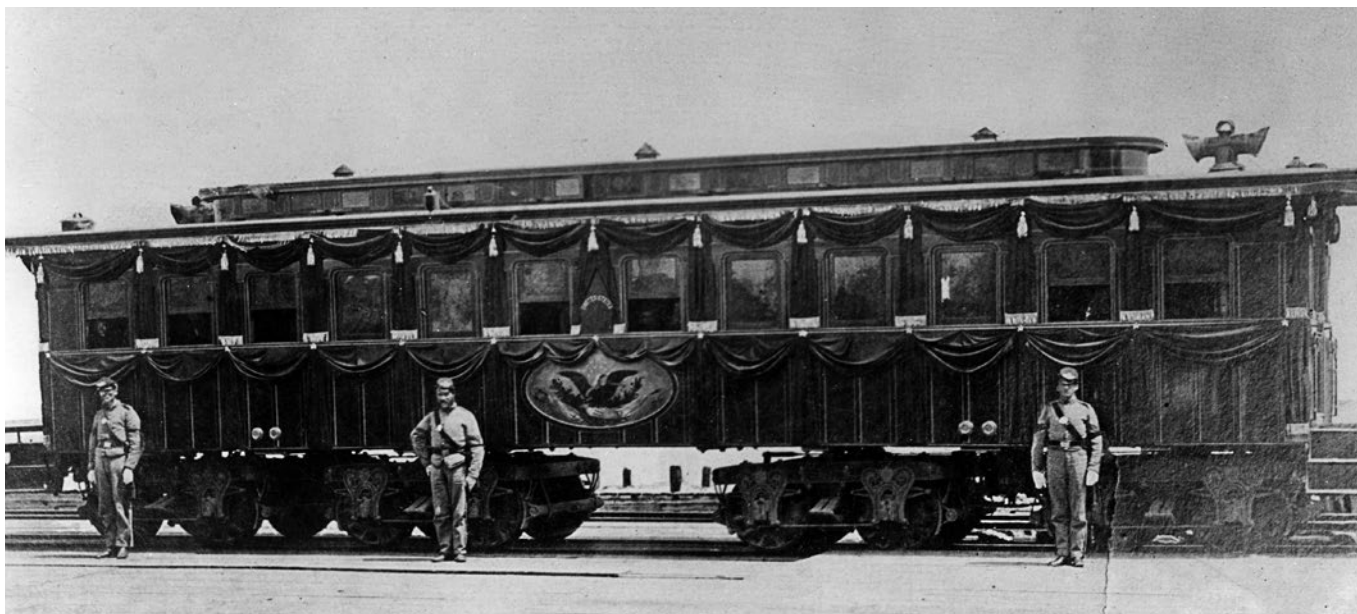


# Presidential Funeral Trains



*President Lincoln's private rail car.*

From the 1840s to the 1940s, if a president needed to travel in the United States he went by train. It wasn't until the end of Franklin Roosevelt's administration in 1945 that an aircraft was configured for presidential use. Until that time, presidents traveled by rail for business, to campaign, and for some, at the end of their lives en route to their final resting places.

## **Notable presidential funeral trains:**

### **ABRAHAM LINCOLN**

In 1864, the U.S. military began building a private rail car for Lincoln. The car was finished in February 1865 but he never had the opportunity to use it. Lincoln was shot April 14, 1865. His funeral train departed Washington, D.C., April 21 on its 180-city, seven-state journey to Springfield, Illinois. His body, along with the casket of his son Willie who had died three years earlier, was carried in his private rail car.

Union Pacific purchased the car in 1866 and used it for directors and other important travelers during the construction of the transcontinental railroad. After removing the furnishings, Union Pacific sold the car in 1903. It was eventually put on exhibit in Minneapolis where it was completely destroyed by fire in 1911. Union Pacific had removed the art panels and silver before the car was sold. The history of the car's furnishings is less clear, but it is known that the couch, chair and desk were on the car in 1868.

### **ULYSSES GRANT**

Died July 23, 1885. Buried in New York, his body was transported by train.

### **JAMES GARFIELD**

Shot twice July 2, 1881, outside the Baltimore and Potomac train station in Washington, D.C. President Garfield later died on the New Jersey seashore where he had been taken to recover from his injuries. His body was transported back to D.C. on an elaborately decorated funeral car.

### **WILLIAM MCKINLEY**

Died September 14, 1901, in Buffalo, New York. Two days later, President McKinley left Buffalo the same way he had arrived – by train. At 8:30 a.m., the Pennsylvania Railroad funeral train pulled out of the Exchange Street Station and made its way to Washington, D.C.

# Presidential Funeral Trains *(continued)*

## **WARREN HARDING**

Died August 2, 1923, in San Francisco. His body was transported to Washington, D.C., via train for the state funeral, but his formal funeral train went from D.C. to Marion, Ohio, where he was buried.

## **FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT**

Died April 12, 1945, in Warm Springs, GA. His body was transported to Washington, D.C., for a state funeral and then by train to Hyde Park, NY, for burial.

## **DWIGHT EISENHOWER**

Died March 28, 1969. Ceremonies honoring the president were held in Washington, D.C., and Abilene, Kansas, the general's home town. After a funeral service in the Washington National Cathedral, Eisenhower's body was taken by train to Abilene, where a second funeral service was conducted on the steps of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library. The funeral train consisted of a three-unit diesel locomotive and 10 rail cars. A specially prepared baggage car carried the president's casket.

Using Chesapeake and Ohio, Baltimore and Ohio, Norfolk and Western, and Union Pacific railroad tracks, the funeral train passed through seven states – Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri – before reaching its final destination in Kansas.